

REMARKS

Reconsideration and allowance of the subject patent application are respectfully requested.

Applicants gratefully acknowledge the indication that claims 9, 10 and 53 contain allowable subject matter. New claim 54 corresponds to allowable claim 9 written in self-standing independent form and new claim 55 corresponds to allowable claim 53 written in self-standing independent form. Claims 54 and 55 are believed to be allowable.

Claims 1-3, 5, 51 and 52 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 102(b) as allegedly being anticipated by Yasukawa (JP 2001-255559). While not acquiescing in this rejection, claims 1 and 51 have been amended. Claim 2 has been canceled without prejudice or disclaimer and conforming amendments have been made to claims 5-7. As such, the discussion below makes reference to the amended claims.

Claims 1 and 51 each calls for a non-single-crystal silicon thin film that is formed by PECVD deposition, or PECVD deposition followed by crystallization, on an insulating substrate in a region where a single-crystal silicon thin film is not bonded. The non-single-crystal silicon thin film is formed as a separate layer from the single-crystal silicon thin film.

Yasukawa fails to disclose or suggest these features. For example, the single-crystal silicon thin film and non-single-crystal silicon thin film of Yasukawa are formed as the same layer. Applicants respectfully submit that by forming the single-crystal silicon thin film and non-single-crystal silicon thin film as the same layer using silicon implantation, as in Yasukawa, the characteristics of a resultant amorphous silicon TFT are inferior to those in which the non-single-crystal silicon thin film can be formed using, for example, PECVD. Moreover, because the single-crystal layer of Yasukawa is not protected during the crystallization thereof using a laser, the characteristics thereof are further degraded.

In contrast, by forming the non-single-crystal silicon thin film as a separate layer from the single-crystal silicon thin film as claimed, these causes of degradation are avoided. Moreover, Applicants respectfully submit that the arrangement of Yasukawa is limited to wafers of 8-12 inches, similar to the background art described at page 5, lines 2-16 of the subject patent

application. As such, Yasukawa possesses the same disadvantages as the background art, especially with regard to cost and size. In contrast, the arrangement of the claims 1 and 51 is not limited to wafers of 8-12 inches.

For at least these reasons, Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1 and 51 and their respective dependent claims cannot be anticipated by Yasukawa.

Claim 4 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being "obvious" over Yasukawa. The office action maintains that the thickness range of claim 4 would have been obvious. However, even assuming for the sake of argument that the claimed thickness was provided for the arrangement of Yasukawa, Yasukawa would nonetheless be deficient with respect to claim 1 (from which claim 4 depends) for the reasons set forth above.

Claims 12-15 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. Section 103(a) as allegedly being "obvious" over Yasukawa in view of Yale (EP 0 559 389). The office action relies on Yale as allegedly showing the features of the insulating substrate. However, the Yale document adds nothing to Yasukawa regarding, among other things, the arrangement of a single-crystal silicon thin film and an insulating substrate as specified in claim 1 (from which claims 12-15 depend). As such, the proposed combination of Yasukawa and Yale would not have made the subject matter of claims 12-15 obvious.

The amendments presented above are believed to place this application in condition for allowance. Consequently, entry is believed to be appropriate and is respectfully requested.

The pending claims are believed to be allowable and favorable office action is respectfully requested.

Respectfully submitted,

NIXON & VANDERHYE P.C.

By: 
Michael J. Shea
Reg. No. 34,725

MJS:mjs
901 North Glebe Road, 11th Floor
Arlington, VA 22203-1808
Telephone: (703) 816-4000
Facsimile: (703) 816-4100